2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

ward migration was involuntary; the southerners were forced out from their former habitat by the competition of alien tribes. Naturally, in the course of their wandering, they left some traces which have been disclosed by the work of archaeologists. Skeletal finds also have shown that northern Siberia was primarily inhabited by a long-headed people of the Nordic type who had come from the west, and who were assimilated or else annihilated by Mongoloid newcomers from the south. Many of these questions still await solution through the work of archaeologists. 172

We have some knowledge of prehistoric Yakut monuments through the recent work of Russian archaeologists, chiefly Petri, whose excavations in the region of Lake Baikal revealed many remains of a horse and cattle breeding tribe, in all probability, the prehistoric Yakut.[1]

The identifications by the chief zoologist of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Bialanitski-Birula, of animal bones found at the Murino sites and the caves of Orkhon show that these are chiefly the remains of domesticated animals—of oxen, rams, goats, and horses. Remains of wild animals, the products of hunting, are very scarce, proving that the people were cattle breeders. Besides, no traces of agriculture were found to the north of Lake Baikal, presenting negative evidence that the prehistoric inhabitants were herders. Further, Bialanitski-Birula [231] pointed out that the ox of these people, like that of the Yakut, was a cross-breed of the yak. Among the iron arrows were found many with bifurcated heads, a characteristic of Yakut arrows.[2] The iron knives and scissors found have the same distinguishing marks as Yakut knives, as will be shown in the discussion of their iron industry. The horseshoe [492] found in the excavations is exactly like the Yakut horseshoe; it is narrow, with holes for nails and one calk in the middle. The Siberian natives, even in stony mountainous places, seldom shoe their horses. The iron bits of an ancient bridle consisted of two unequal parts, without appendages in the corners. This may be explained by the manner in which the rider held the reins on the left side of the horse as do the present Yakut. Modern Yakut bits consist of two equal parts, a form which may be regarded as having been adopted from the Russians, from whom the Yakut learned to harness horses to sledges and carts, for which long reins are necessary. Formerly, the Yakut used the horse only as a riding and pack animal. Appurtenances of horse harness show that the people bred horses. An iron sickle for hay making was found by Petri. It is quite different from the Russian form and resembles the present Yakut sickle.

[1] Petri, E. B., The Prehistoric Blacksmiths of Cis-Baikalia. Chita, 1923. (In Russian).
[2] See Sieroszewski, V. A., The Yakut. Vol. 1 (*Published by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, St. Petersburg*, 1896 in Russian).

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

Kolymsk every summer, bringing flour and other commodities for sale or exchange for furs.

Cultivation of Meadows

The cultivation of meadows consists in the use of grass land for the maintenance of horses and horned cattle. The long and severe winters necessitate the storage of food for domestic animals and hay is the only available forage in Yakutsk Province. In summer the animals are put out to pasture. The meadows are extensively exploited. The grass is cut with sickles. It is of poor quality because none is sown. The quantity of hay needed for the long winter is enormous and the entire short summer is devoted to haymaking. The hay is of uneven quality. There are many late over-ripe grasses; some of the hay is cut during the rain and is consequently an unsubstantial food for the animals. There are no exact data on the quantity of hay usually stored, but, according to some investigators of Yakut economic life, they obtain about 50 per cent of the necessary hay. Despite vast areas of grass lands, the domestic animals will continue to suffer from the scarcity of hay until grass sowing is introduced.

Domestic Animals

Horse and Cattle Breeding. The first travelers and investigators of Yakut Province reported that the primary occupation of the Yakut was the breeding of horses and horned cattle. Driven from the south to their present abode by Mongol-Buryat hordes, the Yakut wandered with their droves of horses and herds of large horned cattle. The former inhabitants of the country, forced farther south by the Yakut, continued their hunting life, and at the same time kept their reindeer and driving dogs.

Historical data for the last two centuries show that the two branches of Yakut animal industry have developed in the direction of increasing the number of horned cattle at the cost of the number of horses. Originally, horse-breeding predominated among the Yakut, now the number of horned cattle is much larger than that of horses.

The following table shows the average number of horses and horned cattle in the three southern districts (Olekminsk, Yakutsk and Viliuisk) for the years 1901–1910 and 1917.

	1901–1910	1917	1925
Horned cattle	304,851	482,005	
Horses	108,942	128,465	
Total	413,793	610,470	536,589

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

Tungus, Lamut, and Yukaghir. But the northern Yakut also keep reindeer for driving as well as riding and have also introduced advanced methods in reindeer breeding. The Yakut reindeer is taller and stronger than that of their neighbors. Reindeer breeding is, nevertheless, a secondary occupation. Rich Yakut reindeer owners do not wander with their herds, but hire special Tungus herders. The Yakut herd owners lead a sedentary or semi-sedentary life.[1]

According to official statistical data for the end of the nineteenth century, there were, in Siberia, about 20,000 reindeer, of which number the Yakut owned a little over 15,000.[2]

Dog Breeding. The rearing of driving dogs is concentrated chiefly in the northern and northeastern parts of Yakut Province. In 1910 there were about 1,762 driving dogs in the Kolyma District and about 470 in the Verkhoyansk District, a total of 2,232. But there are no data as to the number of dogs owned by the Yakut alone. In the Kolyma District it was estimated that there was one dog to every twenty-four inhabitants and in the Verkhoyansk District, one to every eight.

Breeding of Swine, Sheep, Fowl, and Bees. These branches of farming are maintained, to a small extent, chiefly by Russians, in the southern cities. According to the census of 1917, there were 1148 swine: in Yakutsk District, 1020; in Olekminsk, 124; and in Viliuisk, only 4. Although sheep were introduced in Yakutsk Province in the middle of the nineteenth century, they did not increase much in number. In 1917 there were only 354: in Yakutsk District, 313; in Olekminsk, 37; and in Viliuisk, 4. Fowl (hens, ducks, geese, and turkeys) are kept only in the cities and chiefly for their eggs by Russians.

Not far from Yakutsk, the *skoptzy*[1] made unsuccessful attempts to rear bees.

[1] [A Russian religious sect -- ANALYST]

[1] For particulars as to different types of reindeer breeding see Jochelson, Yukaghir.

[2] In the opinion of the author the total number of reindeer in Siberia, in general, as well as the number owned by Yakut, are greatly under-estimated in the official reports.

6: Sauer--116-117 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 231, 415, 273, 796

"Their holidays commence with the month of June, and last about 15 days. The mares having cast, a short time is allowed the colts to suck, that they may acquire strength; they are then tied up, or pent in coops about the hut, to prevent their sucking at will; which is only allowed twice a day, when the mares are milked. The milk is collected in symirs, or large leather buckets formed like a bottle, wide at bottom, and narrow at the top, each [117] containing about an anker; into this a small piece of the stomach of a calf or colt is thrown, and some water mixed with it. It is then kept in constant agitation by a broad-ended stick, until it ferments, and acquires an agreeable acidity, which is very nourishing; and if taken in great quantities, it has an intoxicating quality. Of this drink, which they call koumis, every one collects as much as he can; and some of the chiefs obtain more than 500 ankers of it. A day is then fixed upon by each chief to consecrate his stock, which is performed as follows: [RCH: see category 116, pp. 117-119]."

7: Shklovsky -- 42 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 231, 246

"Our road lay entirely through meadows of luxuriant grass, which gives excellent hay, but unfortunately reaping cannot begin until the 20th of July, when the meadows are somewhat dry. The cut grass is placed not on the ground, but on poles, to dry, so that the meadows are coverd with what look like giant mushrooms, whose stems are the poles and whose heads are the bundles of grass. These hay-cocks are put together in September, when the marshes are slightly frozen. The animals are very fond of this hay, and soon fatten on it."

9: Stadling--89-90 E-3 (1898) 1901 Yakut
116, 178, 231, 422, 556

"The Yakuts are generally poor. Their principal possessions consist of cattle and horses. The Yakut horses are small and shaggy, but very hardy, strong, and good-tempered animals. Throughout the long and terrible winter they subsist on the grass underneath the snow, which, like the reindeer, they remove with their feet, the strongest [90] horses going in front, and the weaker ones following them, eating the uncovered grass. The Yakuts, like other Tatar peoples, are very fond of horse-meat, and from the horses' milk they prepare the well-known kumiss. The number of horses they own, however, is diminishing, and only well-to-do Yakuts as a rule now keep them, the great majority having cattle instead. (1)

1. In former times the Yakuts regarded cattle as unclean animals, but little by little utility has conquered superstition, so that the cow has now to a great extent replaced the horse both as a yielder of milk and meat, and also as a beast of burden."

10: Bush--230 T-3 (1865-67) 1871 Yakut
116, 181, 825, 231

"The Yakouts, notwithstanding their amiable and peaceful dispositions, are generally very cruel toward animals. Their favorite mode of killing a horse for food is to bind it down strongly with cords, when the breast is cut open, and then one of them, thrusting his arm into the cavity, kills the animal by compressing its heart with his hand. They claim that it gives the meat a better flavor."

11: Lansdell--300 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 231, 342, 354

"The winter dwellings of the people have doors of raw hides, and log or wicker walls calked with cow-dung, and flanked with banks of earth to the height of the windows. The latter are made of sheets of ice, kept in their place from the outside by a slanting pole, the lower end of which is fixed in the ground. They are rendered air-tight by pouring on water, which quickly freezes round the edges; and the fact that it takes a long time to melt these blocks of ice thus fixed is highly suggestive of what the temperature must be, both without and within. The flat roof is covered with earth, and over the door, facing the east, the boards project, making a covered place in front, like the natives' houses in the Caucasus. Under the same roof are the winter shelters for the cows and for the people, the former being the larger. The fireplace consists of a wicker frame plastered over with clay, room being left for a man to pass between the fireplace and the wall. The hearth is made of beaten earth, and on it there is at all times a blazing fire, and logs of larchwood throw up showers of sparks to the roof. Young calves, like children, are often brought into the house to the fire, whilst their mothers cast a contented look through the open door at the back of the fireplace. Behind the fireplace, too, are the sleeping-places of the people, which in the poorer dwellings consist only of a continuation of the straw laid in the cow-house."

11: Lansdell--304 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 231, 241, 492

"The Yakutes who inhabit the inclement region adjacent to the Frozen Ocean have neither horses nor oxen, but breed large numbers of dogs, which draw them to and fro on their fishing excursions. Even those living on the 62nd parallel keep cattle under far greater difficulties than usual, for they have to make long journeys to collect hay, and do not always find enough. The cold prevents their breeding sheep, goats, or poultry. Nevertheless, cattle and hunting are their chief means of subsistence, for they do not in general cultivate the land, though in the gardens at Yakutsk are grown potatoes, cabbages, radishes, and turnips; gherkins, too, are reared in hot-beds."

"The difficulties of the summer journey are somewhat different in character [RCH: from the winter journey from Yakutsk to Okhotsk]. A large part of the way lies over swampy ground, on which the causeways are not kept in repair, and where the horses flounder in mud and water, into which they occasionally pitch the rider. It is no uncommon thing for horses to die under the fatigues of the way. The Yakutes, moreover, have a cruel fashion of giving their horses little food whilst journeying. A similar custom obtains farther east, among the Gilyaks, where I found that, though they gave a dog two pieces of fish daily when at home, yet, when travelling, they gave him only one, because the dogs immediately after eating are always lazy and feeble. *

* It does not appear that the Yakutes are otherwise cruel to their horses, for Erman relates that, on going up to a horse that had carried him many miles, to pat his neck by way of saying adieu, the Yakutes came up and embraced the other horses, putting their arms round their necks and hugging them like children. Mr. Hill, too, discovered in a very practical way the regard of the Yakutes for their horses, when, food having run short, and after a dinner of only cranberries and nuts, he proposed that one of the animals should be killed and eaten, the Yakutes replied that they never killed one of their horses until they had passed five whole days together without any sort of food. It would be a shame, they said, that while they

had tea and a morsel of sugar, and the prospect before them of getting other food, one of the poor creatures should be slain. Mr. Hill, therefore, and his merchant friend had to take their guns and hunt for game, with a keenness which they had never known before.

These, then, are some of the difficulties of the old route, from Irkutsk to the Pacific, which happily it did not fall to my lot to be obliged to encounter; but I crossed the Baikal instead, and, after making a détour to the Chinese frontier, continued across the Buriat steppe to the Amur."

12: Galitzin -- 145 [3] N-2 (no date) 1853 Yakut
116, 231

"There is a Yacoute among the wealthy of the country who possesses as many as 1,000 horses. However, being impossibe to gather a sufficient quantity of hay for feeding all of them, the owner feeds only a certain number of them, the others wander about and get grass and moss by removing the snow with their forehoofs."

13: Sarytschew--9-10 N-3 (1785-90) 1806 Yakut
116, 231, 342

"The Jakutish jurts are built from the ground, describing a square of more or less magnitude, according to the size of the family. They first drive three rows of poles fast into the earth, [10] the middle one of which is rather higher than the two on each side. On these poles they lay five beams crossways and sloping, which are covered with rough planks, and afterwards with herbs, mould, and dung. The middle of the interior is generally occupied by a hearth, from whence the smoke is carried out by a sort of chimney, composed of long thick sticks, plaistered in the inside with pitch. The wood is placed in an upright direction on the hearth, and the fire is never extinguished during the winter. Broad benches are fixed round the walls of the jurts or huts, which are divided off by partitions into sleeping places. Their horned cattle are kept in a separate building connected with the jurt by an opening, through which they pass, from whence the whole dwelling is filled with an offensive smell. The summer jurts are altogether different from the winter ones, and have another name, being called urasses; they are round and conical, made of long poles, and covered on the outside with the bark of trees."

16: Great Britain Admiralty - - 166 G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 231, 243

"Their principal occupations are looking after horses and cattle: the former has been their industry for a very long time, the latter has been more recently adopted. They also hunt and fish, and search for fossil-ivory. Cereals have been introduced into their country and are becoming acclimatized."

16: Great Britain Admiralty --166 [3] G-3 (no date)1920 Yakut
116, 231, 361, 576, 825

" They have only lately begun to breed dogs. They regard the dog as an unclean animal, and as having no kut (soul); they are harsh to their dogs; it is a gross offence against good manners to introduce a dog into a Yakut's house 'because of the evil spirits that sit on its tail'. Their habit of horse-breeding led to them setting the yurtas at a considerable distance from one another, because it was necessary to have plenty of pasturage for their big herds; if they had exhausted the pasturage near home, it would have been necessary to send the horses a long way, which would have meant risk from the negligence or dishonesty of the keepers."

17: Erman--266 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 231, 342

"From Nelensk to Olekma we left the ice for three stages, and a distance of ninety-five versts, and travelled through a marshy plain on the left bank. We first met with some Yakutian yurts, with flat roofs covered up high with earth, and surrounded with hurdles, within which the cattle are kept in summer, and then we came to the dangerous spot of which we had been told yesterday."

17: Erman--308-309 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut-1-2
116, 782, 756, 231

"At the yurts of Porotovsk, 109 versts from Yakutsk, I made at noon magnetical and astronomical observations, and here already I found the Russian maps erring considerably in the position of places with respect to Yakutsk; we then went over thickly wooded hills to Churopchinsk, and thence to Aruilákhinsk, where we stayed till morning. In the woods between these places, I remarked for the first time, a singular custom of the nomadic Yakuts. At different points on the road the trees were to be seen hung thick with horse-hair, and my driver assured me that every horseman who passed by was sure to add more or less to this strange store. Here, also, it was manifest that white horses prevail among the Yakuts; but, apart from this, many of the tufts of hair had so weather-beaten an appearance, that there could be no doubt of their antiquity. Others were quite fresh, and had been tied on the boughs but a day or two. Our Yakut attendant said further, in reply to our inquiries--and, indeed, all his answers in similar matters were much to the same effect--that it was done in compliance with ancient custom, and that he knew no other reason for it. Yet the religious bearing of this custom appears at once from its name, which signifies a propitiation for the Lieshi or Spirit of the Woods, as the Kosaks explain it. All the merchants of Yakutsk deem it expedient to adopt, when travelling, the prevalent belief, and to satisfy its demands at the cost of their horses' tails. The Yakuts here have clung to several other devout inventions of their shamans. Thus the annual consecration of a horse is usual with them, as with the Western Turkish tribes. They select for this purpose the best stallions, which, after

receiving certain benedictions, remain thenceforth exempt from every kind of work. It is possible that they intend thereby to offer a kind of satisfaction in general for the labours or violent death await- [309] ing them, yet the shrewd priests have not overlooked the practical advantage of securing good treatment for the fathers of the droves."

17: Erman--398 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 231

"We enjoyed at Yelan once more thepleasures of a true Yakutian homestead, for we shared the hearth with two calves, and slept at the cow's feet, near the open cow-house door. The owners, however, declared that the stock of cattle here is but a shadow of that near Yakutsk, 'because the high sun is more injurious than the severest cold,' and, therefore, they got from a cow here not more than a quarter of a vedrò, or about two-thirds of a quart of milk a day. (1)

1. The vedrò contains 750 cubic inches. It must be observed that the dry and stony nature of the ground round Okhotsk is unfavourable to cattle. In Kamchatka, where more snow falls than at Okhotsk, the grass is so luxuriant that it may be mown three times a year at least. The cows carried thither from Yakutsk are improved by the more abundant pasture, and yield plenty of milk both in summer and winter."

24: Wrangell--38-39 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 231, 343

"Outside there are usually sheds for the cows, [39] which in winter are placed under cover and fed with hay, and in extreme cold weather are even brought into the jurte; whereas the horses are left to shift for themselves as well as they can, by scraping away the snow to get at the withered autumn grass. It is only when they are about to make a journey that they are given hay for a few days previously."

37: Dobell--307 [2] G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 144, 231

"They are men generally of small stature, light, and very active, when they choose to exert themselves, indefatigable on the road, and surpassing every other people in conducting and taking care of horses. In features they resemble strongly the people of the province of Nankin, in China."

37: Dobell--344 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 231

"As the country inhabited by these people has a vast number of lakes, they never want for fish and water-fowl, except in the depth of winter. I saw neither pigs, sheep, now poultry amongst them; nor, in fact, any other domestic animals except those mentioned before; though I have heard that some of them have goats."

38: Dobell--8-9 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 231

"No Yakut should be allowed to receive the Government flour or liquor without his packsaddle being prepared in such a way as to prevent his horses from injury during their journey. In other respects, the Yakuts are most tender and kind to their animals, and seldom beat them; and the attachment of a herd of horses for their keepers is so strong, they will not proceed without them, should they stop and leave them. They are turned out to feed every night, and always collected in the morning, by hallooing to them. Should any of them get out of [9] hearing, the Yakut jumps on one of the others, who is sure to find his companion in a very short time. When the Yakut calls, the first horse that hears answers by neighing, and immediately the whole herd begin to neigh, and run to the keeper."

38: Dobell--35-37 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 231

"One of the great advantages the province of [36] Yakutsk possesses, consiats [sic] in its fine pastures and meadows, which enable the inhabitants to rear a large quantity of cattle and horses. Being at an ouloos (Yakut village), where I observed a great many horses and cattle, and but a slender stock of hay in proportion, I questioned my host how he managed to feed them through the winter. He replied, 'We only feed with hay our milch cows, our oxen destined for beef, our breeding mares, best horses, and some very young cattle: the rest find their own food by scraping the snow off the grass with their hoofs, and by browsing. As the snow is rarely more than seven or eight inches deep at Yakutsk, the grass is but thinly covered, and the cattle find their food very easily. We keep goats, which provide for themselves likewise. If,' added he, 'the spring is very backward, we then give them a little hay until the new grass begins to sprout.'--I cannot, however, admire this mode; for I remarked many Yakuts, who, on account of the facility that nature thus affords, kept an overstock of cattle, the greater part of which were very small and poor. [37] Indeed, all their cattle are very small, as well as their horses; and I ascribe that fact to the want of generous nourishment whilst young."

38: Dobell--37 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 231, 492

"Horses are their peculiar care, because they are profitable for hiring to the government, and to the merchants, for the transport of flour and merchandize; and because, likewise, the favorite beverage of the people, khoomiss, is not considered really good unless made of mare's milk. They certainly rob the colts of their due; a circumstance that prevents their growth. Notwithstanding this, they have a good, strong, hardy race of horses; who will live on bushes when there is no grass, and are certainly the most docile and indefatigable animals I have ever seen of the horse kind. The Yakuts, however, in most respects, are kind masters and never beat a horse until all manner of mild means have been used; and then scolding is employed to try and make him tractable. Horse-flesh also is their favorite food, which they declare is much lighter and better flavored than beef. They use oxen about their homes for drawing wood and hay; and both the horses and cattle resemble those of the Tartars of the Step of Baraba, as much as the Yakuts themselves do that people."

39; Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

dress and dress-ornamentation of the Tartaric peoples, the dualistic religious ideas, and the poetical folk-lore, of Western Asia.

In their old country they were principally horse-breeders. The horses were employed both as beasts of burden and as animals for riding; their skins were used for clothing; their flesh, for food; and kumiss, the fermented drink prepared from mare's milk, served not only as a stimulating beverage, but also as a most important nutritious food.[1] For a time after their arrival in their new abode, the horse was still their principal domestic animal, and kumiss their essential food; but gradually the climatic conditions of the country on the one hand, and contact with Russian culture on the other, have exerted a modifying influence, which is still operative, over both the mental and the material culture of the Yakut. A small part of the tribe in the extreme north of the Yakut province must have experienced a decadence of their former material life. This minority became reindeer-breeders, dog-breeders, or hunters, and fish-eaters. But even into these new lines of life the Yakut introduced more advanced methods.

The tribe as a whole, while engaged in horse and cattle breeding as their chief occupation, began to increase the number of their horned cattle at the expense of their number of horses. Of cow's milk they could make, for use during the long winter, butter, a kind of cheese, and some other milk products which cannot, as we shall see later, be made from mare's milk. The Russian gold-mining companies on the rivers Olekma and Vitim proved profitable buyers of these cattle, and this gave an impetus to the raising of them. Finally, the cultivation of cereal plants, borrowed from the Russians in the southern parts of the Yakut Province, where the climate allows of it, has made such progress in the last twenty years, that at present agriculture is the chief occupation, and bread the staple food, of many Yakut families of the District of Yakutsk, and particularly of that of Olekminsk. Nowadays large droves of horses, and

[1] Some travellers consider that the Yakut horse belongs to the present race of horses of the steppes of southwestern Siberia; but it is difficult to say whether the Yakut horse of to-day has any connection with the extinct horse, the fossil remains of which have been found in the polar regions of northeastern Siberia.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

231 mares for milking, can be found only in those districts far removed from the centres of influence of Russian culture, and they belong to a few very rich families.

178 Together with the passing of the production of kumiss, the 279 ancient ornamented kumiss vessels and goblets are also disappearing, as well as the customs, festivals, and ceremonials asso- 234 ciated with the production and use of kumiss. Kumiss, which 757 of late has been recommended by physicians as an excellent ther- 262 apeutic agent in some diseases, was known as a nutritious form of food in remotest antiquity to all the nomadic peoples of Central Asia and of the southeastern part of Europe. Herodotus also mentions it. It is poorer in fat, casein, albumen, and salts, but much richer in milk-sugar, than cow's milk, and therefore is not adapted for butter and cheese making. Fresh mare's milk tastes somewhat disagreeably sweetish. The Yakut do not like it fresh as a drink, but they take it when it is boiled, and also in their tea. Formerly they made from it — cooked with the pounded roots of *Lilium spectabile*, *L. martagon*, *Butomus umbellatus*, or *Artemisia vulgaris* — a kind of gruel called *butahas*. As far as we know at present, the preparation of kumiss from mare's milk is based on the fermentation caused by micro-organisms. Under their influence, the milk-sugar turns to lactic acid. When this process is over, the fermentation of alcohol from the lactic acid begins. It has been found of late years that the micro-organisms of kumiss, like those of kephir (a fermented drink prepared from cow's milk), form grains, which can be washed, dried, and preserved. With their aid, kumiss is nowadays prepared for medicinal purposes.

234 The Yakut, like the Kirghis and Bashkir, use as a ferment 273 some old kumiss or the residue of the kumiss of the past year, carefully collected from the vessels, and dried and preserved. This ferment of kumiss is called *xoyū* ("pulp"). If they have none, the Yakut, as well as the Bashkir, use sour cow's milk as a ferment; but such kumiss is not considered good by [415] the Yakut. When the mare is being milked, buckets made of birch-bark (see Plate XXII, Fig. 4) are used as vessels to receive the fluid. When the milking is finished, the buckets are left until the milk becomes cold, when it is diluted with an equal

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

262 273 231 I have already mentioned that in former times horse-flesh and kumiss formed the staple food of the Yakut. The hay-makers often carried kumiss with them in skin bottles to the fields as their only food, and it was sufficient for them. "Kumiss slakes the thirst, exhilarates, restores strength, and does not overcharge the stomach," say the Yakut. The hay-makers worked easily and quickly. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that the horse became the object of a particular cult, as an animal on which man chiefly depended for his existence.

773 825 273 776 Kumiss and fat mare's flesh are regarded in the myths as food worthy of the heroes of divine origin. The horse, tradition says, was let down from heaven and given to man by the chief of the benevolent deities, Lord Bright-Creator (Ürüŋ Ayy Toyon).[1] According to another tradition recorded by me on the Kolyma River, Lord Bright-Creator sent down to earth another deity, Bar-Allei-Lord (Bar Allei Toyon), to instruct men how to make kumiss. The deity brought with him to the earth the ferment for making kumiss (*xoyū*). One of the ancestors of the Yakut tribe, Dyghyn, says another legend recorded by me, had such large droves of mares, that the kumiss made of their milk filled whole lakes, and everybody came to their borders and drank.

773 776 538 In the myths we find the winged steed an important personage, — the counsellor, assistant, and companion of the hero in battles and travels. Ayysyt, the goddess of fecundity, is supposed to be near the mare during the first three days of foaling. The same deity, or another deity of the same name, — this is not quite clear, — also assists the lying-in woman. In love-songs we often find, by way of praise, the comparison of the hero to a colt, and of the heroine to a mare.

825 It is regarded as a sin to beat a horse. The bones of a horse must not lie on the ground. In olden times the bones of horses were placed on a platform. If a Yakut finds in his path

[1] For the division of Yakut supernatural beings into "creators" (*ayyi*) and "evil spirits" (*abarγy*), see Jochelson, The Koryak (Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, Leiden, 1905, Vol. VI, p. 109).

40: Burr--103-104 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut
116, 231, 492

"Among the mammals, Siberia is very rich in members of the deer family, one of which, the reindeer, plays a vital part in the economy of the natives. The distribution of this creature depends upon its staple food, the so-called reindeer moss, which, properly speaking, is a lichen, Cetraria, or Cladonia rangiferina. It is not too much to say that, but for this lowly plant, the native population could not exist, for it is the sole food of the reindeer, upon which they depend not only for transport, but for milk, meat and clothing. They are not strong animals, and can pull only a light load; the Yakuts harness them to little sleds such as children use at home, and two men will tuck themselves on board, their feet sticking out, and it takes a couple of reindeer to pull them. But if they cannot pull much, they can pull fast and far, and are superior to the horse for covering distance [104] quickly. Another advantage is that their keep costs nothing. On arrival at his destination, a Yakut will put a pole through their horns and turn them out into the taigá. They wander about, scratching away the snow to expose the fat lichen underneath, while the pole through the horns catches in the trees and prevents them from wandering too far. Next morning the Yakut has no difficulty in tracing their great splay spoor through the snow and recovering them. They are gentle beasts, with the beautiful lustrous eyes of the deer family. Russians, who are not as a rule squeamish, generally refuse to shoot them or treat them as game for this reason.

The Yakuts also milk them; their milk is said to be very rich and creamy."

44: Gilder --301 J-2 (1882) 1883 Yakut
116, 231, 492

"Yakout horses are probably the slowest of all animals except oxen, while the horses upon the post roads of Siberia west of Irkutsk are about the same as those of other countries."

44: Gilder -- 302 J-2 (1882) 1883 Yakut
116, 231, 492

"The Yakout horses of Northern Siberia can scarcely be called horses--they are a sort of domesticated wild animal. They are small, ill-shaped and awkward, with thick hair and very long and heavy mane and tail. The front lock often entirely conceals the eyes and the whole front of the head. They stumble and fall in the most unexpected and unnecessary places, and when down make no effort to assist themselves to their feet. They simply stick out their heads to reach for such dried, frost-killed grass or bunches of shrubs as may be within reach until urged to self-assistance by the kicks and voice of their driver."

45: Lesseps--202 T-2 (1788) 1790 Yakut
116, 231, 361, 563

"In about five hours we came again to the sea, which we left at a short distance from the village of Iné, where we arrived in the dusk of the evening.

This ostrog is thirty wersts from the [RCH: Iné] mountain, and is peopled by Russians and Yakouts, whose habitations are isbas [RCH: Russian-type dwellings made of wood] and yourts. They have the care of a stud of two hundred horses, which we had an opportunity of seeing, ten wersts from the village."

45: Lesseps--260-261 T-2 (1788) 1790 Yakut
116, 231, 492

"Within a short distance from Medvejégolova, my horse fell under me, and it was impossible to make him get up again; I had fortunately time to quit the saddle, and received therefore no injury. We left the beast on the spot (1), where it doubtless

1. The Yakouts seemed not to be much concerned at the loss of these animals, and have no idea of affording them any assistance. When they refuse to go on, or fall down from weakness or fatigue, they are abandoned to their deplorable fate, and their carcasses are left to be devoured by bears, who never relinquish their prey while anything remains but the bones. [261] It was added, that the Yakouts lose in this manner every year four or five thousand horses, in transporting the different objects of the commerce which they undertake.

ex-[261]pired a few hours after."

46: Cottrell--138-139 T-2 (1840) 1842 Yakut
116, 222, 231

"The cold prevents their keeping sheep, goats, pigs, or poultry. Close to the Frozen Ocean, they have neither pasturage, cattle, nor horses, in lieu of which they keep a large stock of dogs for their fishing expeditions, and in the [139] breeding season they take a great quantity of wild fowls' eggs. Hunting and fishing enable them to pay their taxes, and purchase some few necessaries of life."

45: Lesseps--261-262 T-2 (1788) 1790 Yakut
116, 231, 361

"We proceeded the next day, at nine o'clock in the morning, and forded the river Okhota, the course of which we were no longer to pursue. I perceived here and there some Yakout yourts at a considerable distance from each other: seldom are any number of them seen together.

The disposition of these families to live in this isolated manner, results from a motive of interest that is of the first import-[262]ance. Horses being their chief source of wealth, if the proprieters (some of whom possess more than a thousand) built their habitations nearer to each other, how would they be able to procure nourishment for their numerous studs? The neighbouring pastures must soon be exhausted, and it would be necessary to send multitudes of them to a considerable distance; but how many inconveniences would result in consequence of the negligence or dishonesty of the keepers."

/131 cont./

122 this one; we could not even buy a reindeer from him. /132/
123 He pretended to be a poor man and to own only five of them, on which he had come here with his family; nevertheless immediately after he left us, we saw 11 fine reindeer, which accompanied us along the bank for a long time. We had already heard about the inhospitality and untrustworthiness of the people along the Olenék; now we could report on it ourselves.

Fortunately on the evening of the next day our attention was again drawn to a human habitation by a column of smoke. Soon after we had landed a little distance from it, a boat came toward us. The occupant of it, perhaps frightened because he saw me lounging on the bank with my gun, approached with his weapon held ready and called to us from a distance. Only when he was addressed in his mother tongue (Jakut /Yakut/) did [186] he put aside the weapon and come to land. He later explained that he had taken us for Tatars, who, according to a legend [648] that he had heard in childhood, were supposed to be great robbers. Boldonó's attempt to whisper something in the ear of the new arrival was fortunately thwarted by Sseliphón, and so he proved to be ready to sell us a reindeer immediately, as well as, after some parleying, to accompany us as a guide on our further travels. Boldonó was kept away from our new guide, named Ignátij, as much as possible by our men, who had also become suspicious of him, and was paid off the next morning, this time certainly not generously and with a few threats on account of his bad conduct. /The last paragraph on p. 132 and pp. 133-134 are omitted in the translation; see the foreign text./

[342] /135/ On the evening of August 19 we again came in sight of a tschum /choom/, as well as a larger herd of reindeer, [231] probably about 50 head. Ignátij explained that this was a Jakute /Yakut/ with whom he was acquainted, Filípp Chologón, with whom in the previous spring he had hunted wild reindeer on the upper Beké, a rich man and formerly a community elder, who also knew the river well, "for he swims around on it like a gagára." In any case it would pay to make his acquaintance. We therefore, since no good landing place was to be found in his vicinity, put in a few versts below and sent Ignátij and

/182 cont./

114 Olenék, near the mouth, he found the sunken graves overgrown with moss and lichens; only a weathered wooden cross with a barely legible inscription recalls the hero to mind. Perhaps an age that has again turned its interest to a significant degree to the navigation of the Arctic Ocean will set up a worthy monument for this deserving champion at the place where he ended his heroic career.

175 At that time Russian peasants probably lived
178 here; perhaps the present inhabitants are in part descendants
[651] of the many crews that came here with those bold commanders; they still call themselves krestjáne, i.e., peasants, and their crown tax seems to be standardized accordingly, differing from that of the other Jakuten /Yakut/; in everything else they are completely Jakutized and any reminder of former times has
[829] disappeared. But they complain that they are becoming ever
[162] fewer, not, say, because of especially devastating sicknesses, but because only daughters are preponderantly born to them. I do not know whether this phenomenon also occurs among other ichthyophagists. But that is what they are in the truest sense of the word.

226 During the greater part of the year they feed themselves and
262 their dogs almost exclusively on fish. Mukssún and o'mul of
231 considerable size are the principal fish, also taiméne /taimen/ and néljma, for which, however, this was not the proper season, and therefore, instead of the anticipated delicacy, we had
226 to be content with the former, less prized fish. Otherwise only a few smaller kinds of fish are found here, but no sturgeon or sterlet, although these, as we /183/ learned on the journey, are caught, even though rarely, much farther upstream in the region of the Ssiligír. Fishing is also productive in the tundra lakes; in particular two kinds present there were brought to us, the ihúi and the mungnúr, the latter a very tasty fish that is also quite common in the Olenék itself, where from the Ssiligír

/204 cont./

122 son Iwán to take care of any officials passing through, and we
123 were thus entertained in the most friendly manner, and on the following day preparations were made at once for our unimpeded further journey.

On this evening I celebrated my birthday, for which for many weeks I had been saving a few cigars, /205/ which -- although, as I have said before, they had by no means come from Havana -- as a pleasure missed for a long time, put us in the jolliest mood. As of late we had had only pipe tobacco, which we had managed to get in Ssiktjách and Bulún with great difficulty and which could hardly last as far as Werchojansk. Besides, our host had set before us a delicacy that we liked very much, a mixture of butter and whey, called konják here. It is made out of cow's milk and, to be sure, what interested us most, here on the spot. To our great astonishment we had noticed a few horses and cows just a few versts from our present lodgings, which we had certainly not expected here, scarcely 30 versts from the timber line and at a latitude of about 70°. In Ssiktjách, located still somewhat to the south and much farther from the timber line, Mrs. Rjeschétnikow, who otherwise, as has been mentioned, was very successful in her acclimatization experiments, had told us about the impossibility of raising livestock in that region, and even much farther upstream on the Lena we were told that there were no horses, to say nothing of cattle, which, indeed, is scarcely found at all along the Lena beyond Jakutsk and its close surroundings.

We learned from our talkative host various details about his livestock. It consists of about 20 horses and over 10 head of cattle. The former were brought here by his grandfather and the present specimens were born and raised here. They belong to a small, but vigorous breed, have a thick pelt, and withstand the terrible cold very well. Summer and winter, day and night, they remain out in the open, and only the foals are treated somewhat more gently. /206/ Cattle raising, on the other hand, requires much greater effort. The stable abuts directly against the yurt and gets its warmth from it, and also, in order not to let any cold in, has only one door, into the yurt, which in fact brings into

/206 cont./

231 343 the latter an atmosphere not exactly very pleasing to a European, particularly when a few pet animals are brought nearer to the warm stove and therefore also nearer to the astonished traveler. The effort expended is well rewarded, however, and the cows here are praised for their abundant milk. They were acclimatized here only about eight years ago by Martin Borogón, but by no means represent, as we were inclined to assume, the extreme outposts of their breed in the north, and, on the contrary, as we were told here, cows -- not to mention horses -- are said to be raised with considerable success by the merchant Ssánnikow even in Ustj-Jansk, that is, at about 71° latitude and on the shores of the Arctic Ocean, to which the good pasture there is said to contribute the most. According to the view of our host, cattle raising would even be profitable at the mouth of the Lena, because there, too, excellent fodder is to be found -- the alpine pastures are indeed famous; why therefore should not the tundra pastures so similar to them, albeit much poorer, also be useful for dairy cattle? It could be determined by trying it. The mouth of the Lena is likewise inhabited by Jakut-speaking tribes, which, however, as I have already said, are actually of Tungus origin. Could this be the reason that, in comparison with the true Jakuten /Yakut/, which we had before us here in Dshejelák-Dshaná, they had less energy, particularly with regard to the livestock-raising brought by the Jakuten from their original southern homeland? The unsuccessful acclimatization attempts made by the Russians along the Lena may perhaps be attributed to the unfavorable location of the place -- the /207/ vicinity of Ssiktjách, for example, seems in fact to be unsuitable for raising livestock.

136 We learned a great deal more this evening about the fauna of the country. Only foxes are commonly found here, and in the neighboring tundra arctic foxes and reindeer, as well as hares and ermine. Squirrels, although of good quality, are not plentiful and therefore do not represent an article of trade; with regard to other fur-bearing animals, the sable is not found at all and the glutton only very rarely; as for beasts of prey, only an occasional wolf that comes over from the mountainous parts of the tundra; bears, on the other hand, are completely unknown. We were interested in the news that elk were found here only 15 years ago,

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

(Yakutskiy, Vilyuyskiy, and Olekminskiy Okrugs). An internal market was established and the development of economic ties speeded up the growth of national self-awareness. 175 648

Despite the cruel exploitation of the poorer Yakuts by the tsarist authorities and their own bourgeois-toyon hierarchy, the class struggle in Yakutiya up to 1890 was restricted to covert forms. But from this time the struggle of the ulus poor for land, possessed by the toyons, grew more and more intense. The growing discontent, however, was to some extent utilized by the toyons themselves, who were able by skillful maneuvering to direct the discontent away from themselves and toward the tsarist officialdom during the 1905–1906 revolution. In 1906 the toyons set up the Yakut Union—a bourgeois-nationalist organization, which did not last very long.

During the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917, the movement of the Yakut masses for liberation developed more deeply and widely. At first it was led predominantly by Bolsheviks (particularly in Yakutsk), but after the return of most of the political exiles to Russia (in May 1917), the counterrevolutionary groups of the toyons, who had joined forces with the Social-revolutionary-bourgeois section of the urban population, gained the upper hand.

The struggle for Soviet power in Yakutiya dragged on for a long time. It was only on June 30, 1918, that the Soviet regime was officially proclaimed for the first time in Yakutsk, and only in December 1919, after the liquidation of the Kolchak forces all over Siberia, that the Soviet regime was finally established in Yakutiya.

Pastoralism

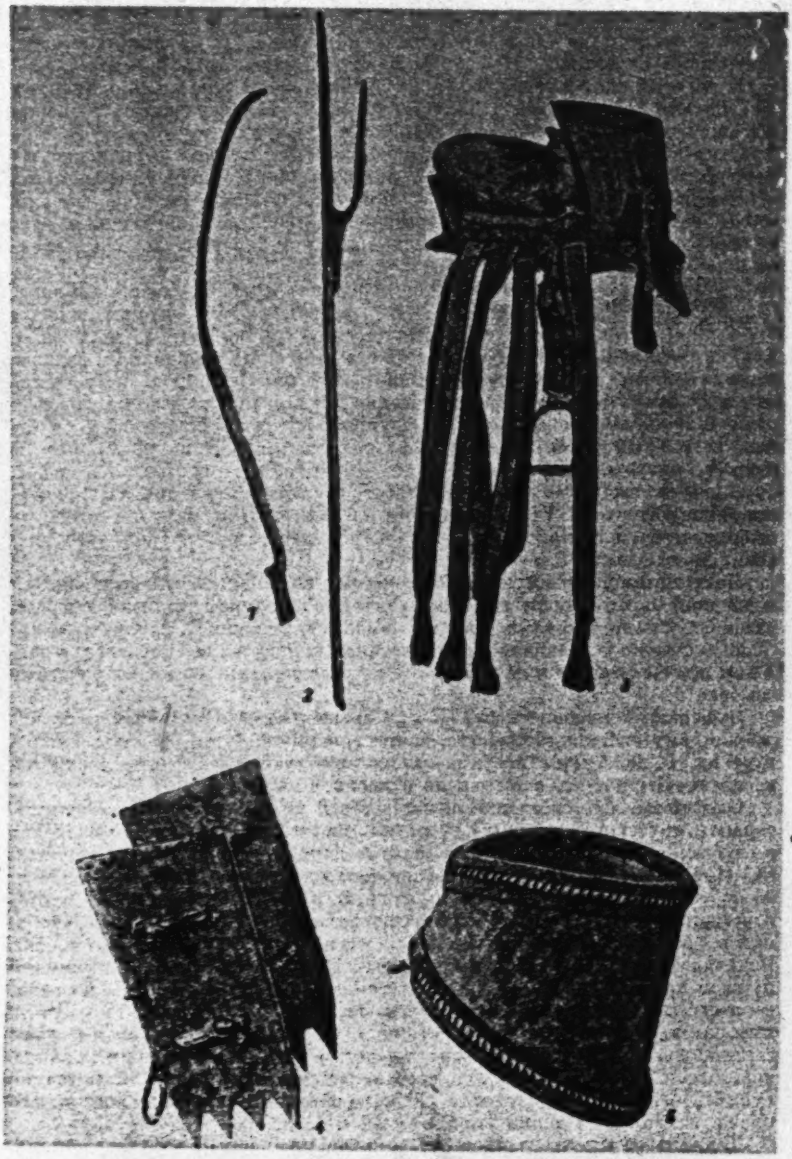
Pastoralism has been the principal branch of Yakut economy for centuries, clearly distinguishing the Yakuts from the surrounding peoples. In Russian documents of the 17th century the Yakuts are sometimes called "the horse people." But both at that time and later, apart from horse-breeding, the principal form of Yakut economy was the breeding of cattle. These were distributed more evenly among the different classes of the population than horses, which were concentrated in the hands of the toyons. 231

During the 19th century, horse-breeding in Yakutiya gradually declined. At the end of the century, there were only 115,000–130,000 horses and 220,000–260,000 head of cattle. Apart from these types of livestock, the Yakuts also had dogs (both hunting dogs and watchdogs) and cats as domestic animals. In the northern regions, the Yakuts herded reindeer, like the Evenks. Other types of domestic animals such as sheep, goats, pigs, and also poultry were unknown before the arrival of the Russians, and were hardly to be found at all on Yakut farms right up to the Revolution.

With regard to methods of keeping cattle, the Yakuts had long practiced two basic systems—pasturing and stabling. The horses were left to graze both in the summer and (usually) in the winter; by no means was fodder always stored away for them and on many farms the horses had to dig it up with their hooves from under the snow throughout the winter. The Yakuts stored up hay as winter fodder for foals and cattle.

The Yakuts were familiar with mowing before the arrival of the Russians (the current opinion that the technique of mowing was acquired from the Russians is wrong), although it was evidently conducted on a smaller scale. Legend states that in ancient times bone scythes were used for mowing. But the Yakut scythe, which was retained until recently 412

[p. 249]



241
← 492 →

231 ●

Farming implements: 1—old-type hump-backed scythe; 2—wooden hay fork; 3—old-type saddle with metal inlay; 4—muzzle for calves made with boards with teeth; 5—birchbark muzzle for calves.

(up to the beginning of the 20th century), is a humped iron scythe with a short, curved handle with which the grass was rather hewn (left and right) than mown. Later on this scythe was replaced by the Russian Lithuanian-type scythe and is never used nowadays. The Yakuts mowed the grass in the alasy and river valleys, gathering the hay into small sheaves, in which it often became soaked and rotted away, hence the quality of the hay was not usually very high.

In the winter, the cattle were kept in cold, dark and crowded khotons, which were usually built under the same roof as the dwelling; the animals were usually herded into the khoton only at night, while in the daytime they were left outside, in the frost. When there was a lack of hay, the cattle had little to eat, and were watered with icy water from a hole in the ice. The austere conditions under which the cattle were kept and the cold climate made them hardy, but unproductive. The Yakut cow yielded an average of 60 buckets of milk a year, and for two or three months in the winter was left unmilked. The mares were only milked in the summer, as a general rule.

Both the cattle and the horses were utilized in much the same way; they gave milk, meat, and hides, and served for transportation (oxen were usually harnessed to carts, while horses were ridden, or carried packs).

The predominance of pastoralism involved preservation of the semi-nomadic way of life. Until recently the Yakuts retained the custom of moving twice a year—round about May and October—from the winter to the summer camps, and back again. The winter dwellings were usually set up near the mowings, while the summer dwellings (which, incidentally, were comparatively close by the former) were built close to the pasture-lands.

Fishing, Hunting and Agriculture

The second branch of economy in importance was fishing. There was a tremendous amount of carp and a small fish called mundu in the abundant lakes, and coregonus muksun, white salmon and so on were plentiful in the rivers. For the poor people who had no cattle, fishing had long been a main occupation; the expression balyksyt (fisherman) is used in documents of the 17th century in the sense of "a poor man." At the same time, there were actually complete tribal groups who seem to have lived chiefly by fishing. These were the so-called "foot clans" of the Yakuts (Osekui, Ontuls, Kokui, Kiriks, Kyrgydays and Orgots). These tribes, who were clearly a remnant of the very ancient prepastoral population, were first discovered in the 17th century by Russians on the Vilyuy. For the Yakut pastoralists, fishing was an essential subsidiary occupation and has retained its importance until our own day.

The fish were caught chiefly in the summer, but there was also fishing through the ice during the wintertime. Use was made of seines which were chiefly made of horsehair, smaller nets, and sack-nets, etc. In the autumn there was usually collective fishing with a large seine, and the catch was divided among all those taking part, in accordance with ancient custom.

There is a hypothesis (V. L. Seroshevskiy) that Yakut fishing was only recently borrowed from the Evenks and Russians. In actual fact, fishing is the oldest form of economy among the population of the Lena region, including the ancestors of the Yakuts.

Hunting is the third, though far less important, branch of Yakut economy. Just like fishing, it goes back to very ancient times. During the

Nevertheless, the meadows and fisheries had already been taken over to The Yakuts

some extent by the toyons. The seizure of them was accompanied by a hard struggle since the communes resisted the toyon claims to their own land.

Such, in general terms, was the social structure of the Yakuts by the time the Russians arrived. Tsarist policy between the 17th and 19th centuries speeded up the development of social relations, so that Yakut society just before the October Revolution had already changed very much from what it had been three centuries ago. Nevertheless, many phenomena proved extremely stable and retained their archaic nature until recent times. Just before the Revolution the division of the Yakuts into strata according to the property they possessed was extremely marked. Most of the population did not even have enough cattle for the hunger norm (this norm, when the grade of the livestock was low, was considered to be two head of livestock per person), whereas in the few toyon households there were several dozen head of livestock per person. However, the unequal distribution of the livestock was by no means anything new for the Yakuts. But the question of land was different. The system which had grown up in the domain of land tenure was of comparatively recent origin. Since the arrival of the Russians in Yakutiya, the process of decomposition of the ancient communal-clan system of using the meadowland had been stepped up. The toyons were vigorously seeking to acquire the common lands. The development of private land ownership by the toyons continued to the 1760's, when certain measures introduced by the Russian administration gave it a new direction. In 1765, Yakuts were forbidden to buy or sell land, and in the next few years, through the activity of the Yakut Tribute Commission, the distribution of land in accordance with the so-called "sable" and "fox" taxes or parts of them was introduced among the Yakuts. Later on, in about 1820, this distribution of land assumed the form of the so-called "class system" of land usage, which legalized the extremely unequal distribution of the land, though, on the surface, it seemed to be something like common land usage. This "class system," which was later modified, had assumed the following form by the beginning of the 20th century.

The unit of measurement of land among the Yakuts was the "rick" (*кургу*), a plot of land from which one hayrick could be mown (the size of the rick ranged from 10 to 30 cartloads, sometimes as many as 40 or 60). These allotments made up plots (*өлбүгэ*) which were extremely varied in size, depending on the "class," and there were three or four "classes." One first-class plot (*бастыг* or *улахан өлбүгэ*) was equal to two second-class plots (*орто өлбүгэ*) and three or four third-class plots (*кенниki* or *хуччугуй өлбүгэ*). The population was also divided into three or four classes: the toyon households belonged to the first class, and received a first-class plot, the middle households were usually assigned to the second class and the poorer people to the third and fourth classes, each receiving the corresponding clan plot. Thus, the system itself gave the toyons plots of land which were three or four times larger than those of the poorer people. It is true that in return for this the toyons had somewhat greater obligations, but the difference in their extent was extremely small. However, this inequality was by no means the only thing. The toyons actually possessed much more land, having seized it in a variety of different ways. For example, they had several plots, rather than just one, by registering them in the names of their children, workers and so on. It was also the custom to give officials (who were more often than not themselves toyons) additional plots of land, so-called *указ-кургу* (from the Russian word "ukaz" [edict]), for which, incidentally, there was no payment. The influential toyons also obtained extra plots called ugayy (or kharyy).

233 reindeer from burning themselves they erect several poles--buota--
in the shape of a cone over the smoke fire. Another, more effective measure against the vermin is that of making a nomadic trip to the north or to the high hilltops, where it is colder than in the low places of the tundra. But in their wanderings over the rocky hilltops the reindeer wear down their hoofs, which therefore often become affected with hoof cancer and require careful attention.

In winter the herd is driven some distance away from the camp to a moss pasture, and if this is situated at a quite considerable distance, several "aaku" or other more domesticated reindeer are left at the chooms so that in case of necessity it will be possible to use them both for driving home the herd and for short excursions from the camp. In a severe blizzard the reindeer behave in exactly the same way as when they are beset by gnats in the summertime: they gather together into a bunch and each of them tries his best to force his way into the center of the herd. This continues until the cold begins to chill the reindeer; well-fed reindeer will hold out in such a blizzard for a period of three days, after which they disperse in various directions against the wind, so that their fur is not blown against its direction of growth. In cases like this the Tavgi reindeer have a great advantage since, being used to the open tundra, they easily endure the blizzard and do not run away.

231 Great help is afforded to the herders by the Tavgi reindeer dogs.
233 Small, short-legged, and for the most part all white, they remind one of polar foxes [Figure 1]. When it is necessary to drive the herd home one has only to point with his [186] hand, whistle, and cry out: "Truu, truu, sar syar!"--and the dog will be off like a shot and round up all the reindeer in a trice. Usually when there is a large number of reindeer two dogs are released and they drive the herd home by running about on two opposite sides of it. Knowing this "nasty" habit of the dogs, the reindeer cannot bear them; they submit to the dogs while in the herd, but if a lone deer encounters a dog he will attack him with his horns. Some dogs bite calves to death in the excitement of driving the reindeer home. In order that the dogs may not harass the reindeer unnecessarily during the nomadic wanderings they are tied to sleds in winter, and in summer they are hobbled by having one of their forelegs tied up. In order that their forelegs may not grow numb, they have their right and left legs tied alternately. The reindeer dogs are usually bought from the Tavgi and are quite expensive, good ones being exchanged for as much as two reindeer, where the value of one

231 reindeer is twenty-five to thirty rubles.

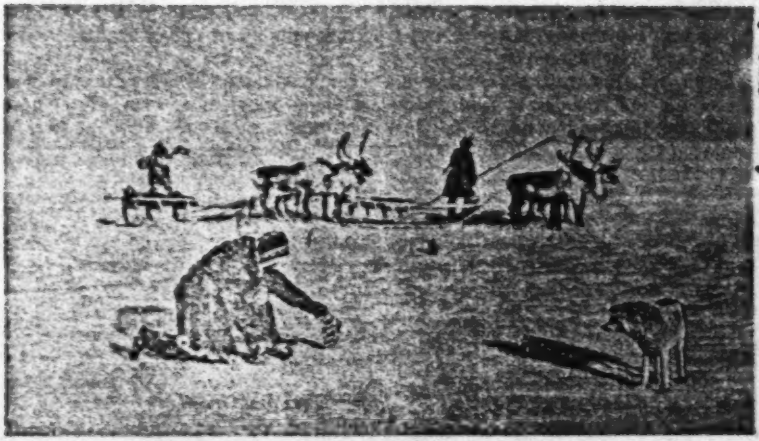
233 The runaway reindeer give a lot of trouble. In order to hold them back a ring made out of rose willow is put around their neck, and
233 on this is hung a small wooden block in the shape of a fork, or a long stick left thick at one end so as to support the crosspiece through which it is thrust [Figure 2b]. Sometimes these types of blocks are hastily replaced in case of necessity by a stick fastened at its mid point to the neck of the reindeer [Figure 2c]. The small block strikes the reindeer painfully on the knees, thus preventing him from running. But there are still more wild domestic reindeer--tehii taba, or s'r'' taba--which are always trying to get away from the herd by some means; as if that were not enough, they lure the others away by their bad example. Such reindeer have a small block--the mene [Figure 2d]--put on their foreleg, and a cord is tied tightly around their back leg above the joint [Figure 2, upper right], so that when they run off to one side they are forced to follow the herd on three legs. In order not to lose the runaway reindeer the natives make bells out of tin and fasten them to the necks of the runaways; the bells are called kyoyleen [Figure 2a]. In cases where the runaways are mares they leave the calves with them, and to restrain the mares the calves are tied to trees, if there is a forest. In order that the calf may not get himself all tangled up, the natives strip enough bark off the tree around which the rope is tied so that the loop will slide freely. However, they do this only in the autumn, when the gnats have disappeared.

2.

In spite of the fact that the reindeer is widely used as a beast of burden, it has still not become completely domesticated. Each year the domestic reindeer break away from the herd in dozens and increase the number of wild reindeer. They run away during a blizzard, or in the summer while searching for mushrooms, and never return. The mass raids of the wild reindeer--the "aalin"--are a serious threat to the Dolgan economy. In spite of such a negative feature the domestic reindeer are a real boon for the inhabitants of the northern regions; it is only thanks to them that hunting is possible, to say nothing of the fact that both the food and the clothing of the natives is obtained from the reindeer.

How true is the observation of A. F. Middendorf that for human beings the chief quality of the reindeer is its submissiveness, which makes it an obedient implement in the hands of a man both to a much greater degree than the horse, and with much less exertion on

55:Popov E-5 (no date) 1964 RV2 Yakut RV2
Dolgan



Setting bait for foxes. "Victory" collective farm, Khatangskiy Rayon, Taymyr National Okrug.

become common. The art of dancing was practically unknown to the Dolgans. Like the Evenks, they only had rounds (with the refrain "kheyro") in which the men and women went round and round, leading each other by the arm and stamping on the ground.

The graphic art of the Dolgans was of an applied nature. Both festive and ordinary clothing was richly ornamented with beads or appliquéd with narrow strips of colored material. Patterned embroidery with deerhair on suede dyed red with an infusion of alder bark or ochre, or dyed black with graphite, was common. Also to be found was fine openwork embroidery with tendon thread on the straps and belts of the reindeer harness. Decorating the clothing was a job of the women. The men mainly engaged in mammoth-ivory carving. They acquired a particularly high degree of skill in carving cheek-plates for the reindeer halter. Tin-inlaid fronts for reindeer saddles and knife handles were also found. The smiths were considered to be very skilled at inlaying iron objects with copper and silver. The runners and backs of light, low sleds common in the Khatangskiy Rayon show an intriguing range of colors. Dolgan designs for the most part are geometric; they consist of combinations of crosses, semicircles, zigzags and broken lines. Wood-carving of a religious nature was also commonly found. The representations were usually very symbolic.

The Post-Revolutionary Period in the Life of the Dolgans

[In 1926, there were already 17 cooperative stores in the Dolgan territory. In 1931, the former clan Soviets were changed over and replaced by territorial nomadic Soviets, which went to make up the Taymyr Dolgan-Nennish National Okrug.

[Collectivization of the Dolgans was begun in 1930-31 and completed in 1938. The Dolgan collective farms have collectivized reindeer herds, lines of permanent polar-fox traps, supplies of portable steel springtraps, firearms for hunting and protection of the herds, seines and vertical nets, reindeer harness, sleds, buildings, and special Arctic clothing. The

The personal property of the collective-farm members includes herds of reindeer (up to 100 head), transport equipment, vertical nets, hunting guns and hunting and fishing tackle. Reindeer-herding remains the chief branch of the economy, but is now done in accordance with good animal husbandry practice. A reindeer technician and a veterinary assistant are attached to each team, which looks after a subherd.]

The Dolgan reindeer-herders on the collective farms pasture the herds in good grazing ground, far from the herding tent by day, and as night falls drive them back to the tent. Having rested, the reindeer at midnight begin to feed near the tent; at dawn they are driven to new feeding grounds some distance away. This grazing system, on the one hand, keeps the reindeer well fed and, on the other hand, they do not stray during the night and are easy to watch. Twenty-four-hour-a-day, year-round guarding of the reindeer has become a rule in collective herding.

[The herd of reindeer is constantly growing. Thus, in the Avamskiy Rayon, the number of reindeer increased over the last five-year period, by more than 50%. The necessity of yearly migrations along the tundra from Dudinka to the Anabar has been eliminated; previously this had a most unfavorable effect on Dolgan reindeer-herding. The demand for pack-reindeer has been reduced, due to the carriage of goods into the Avamskiy and Khatangskiy Rayons by the Northern Sea Route; from here they are brought to remote inland points by steamboat or cutter. Previously, the only route connecting the Dudinka with the Avamskiy and Khatangskiy Rayons in the winter was the reindeer highway from Dudinka to Popigay. Connections are now maintained winter and summer by airplane, although reindeer transport is still of some importance. Its technology is unchanged.

[Hunting technology has been reconstructed. Traps are set in the autumn before the beginning of the blizzards. For this purpose, hunting brigades sometimes journey to the north for several hundred kilometers into the taiga, spending the nights in sled-tents with iron stoves. Hunting brigades are made up before the beginning of the season, traps being distributed on the basis of 150–200 pitfall traps and 10 springtraps per hunter. With the first snow the brigades go out into the tundra and begin to hunt wild reindeer. Foxtraps are baited with the surplus meat obtained. In the Khatangskiy Rayon alone, where the majority of the hunters are Dolgans, the collective farms during the 1948–49 season set 5000 new pitfall traps and prepared 1000 bait-pits for foxes, in which they placed more than 40 tons of bait.

[Fox-hunting begins on November 15th. Springtraps are placed by experienced hunters at places where wild reindeer have been killed in the autumn, or on the bloody tracks of wounded wild reindeer near bait-pits, or previously discovered burrows. Hunting is the main source of income for Dolgan collective farms. The previous predatory methods have gone out of use—spearings, stockades, geese nets. Fishing has become important in a number of areas. Vegetable-gardening and animal husbandry (other than reindeer) have developed on many Dolgan collective farms. The members grow chiefly radishes, cabbage and onions.

[A process of settling down the previously nomadic population is in progress. In the new settlements where the collective-farm members whose work does not make them nomadic live, dwelling-houses of the Russian type have been built, along with various other farm and public buildings. Many settlements have their own electric stations.]

The members of reindeer-herding and hunting brigades lead a nomadic life. Their families frequently travel with them. Separate nomadic groups are now set up, not on the basis of individual relations among different